

myGVSU 2019 Campus Climate Survey Task Force

To: Felix Ngassa, Chair of ECS

Jesse Bernal, Vice President for Inclusion and Equity & Executive Associate for Presidential Initiatives

Kathleen VanderVeen, Associate Vice President for Equity & Compliance

From: Melanie Shell-Weiss and Shawn Bultsma, Task Force Co-Chairs

Re: myGVSU 2019 Campus Climate Survey Task Force Recommendations

Date: March 8, 2021

Task Force Members: Shawn Bultsma (COE, co-chair), Genevieve Elrod (KCON), Courtney Karasinski (CHP), Salvador Lopez-Arias (CCPS), Marie McKendall (SCB), Hazel McClure (UL), Dana Munk (CLAS), Melanie Shell-Weiss (BCOIS; co-chair), Jeff Ward (PCEC), Richard Yidana (CLAS)

Background: Following a Discussion and Assessment of the myGVSU 2019 Campus Climate Survey Preliminary Results at a meeting of the University Academic Senate (UAS) on July 31, 2020, ECS Chair Felix Ngassa invited Vice President Jesse Bernal to discuss some concerns raised about the campus climate survey results on August 7, 2020. Because of concerns that were raised, UAS recommended that the results of the survey (especially the quantitative results) should not be used to make decisions until after a task force put together by UAS had reviewed the results with VP Bernal and had made recommendations for a way forward.

The task force was formed on September 1, 2020 and charged with working with VP Bernal and AVP Kathleen VanderVeen to determine next steps with regard to the 2019 myGVSU Campus Climate Survey, including identifying ways that any qualitative data obtained through the study might still be used. The expectation was that work of the task force would start as soon as possible and be completed as quickly as possible since results from the survey were identified as being important to the work of the Network of Advisors for Racial Equity, an initiative launched by GVSU President Philomenia Mantella on June 17, 2020.

Summary of Work: The Task Force met a total of four times between September 21 and November 30, 2020. Members also completed a significant amount of work asynchronously, reviewing the full survey instrument from 2019 with common questions from the 2015 and 2011 Climate Surveys, the complete slide deck showing analysis conducted by Qualtrics for the common questions, common questions on which analysis had not yet been conducted. On September 28, AVP VanderVeen shared with the Task Force an outline of the “Qualitative Data Analysis plan for myGVSU 2019 Climate Survey Open Response Question” which the Division of Inclusion & Equity had arranged with the GVSU Statistical Consulting Center. The Task Force rewrote the summary data presentation, delivering a final draft of those slides to VP Bernal and AVP VanderVeen on March 5, 2021 along with its recommendations.

Recommendations:

The Task Force recommends the following next action steps:

- That use of the 2019 myGVSU Climate dashboard data be limited to university-level analysis only. This data should not be used to draw more specific conclusions about college or unit level climate.
- That findings from the qualitative data analyzed by Professor Sango Otieno's team in the GVSU Statistical Consulting Center can be used as recommended by that team.
- Responses to the 2019 myGVSU Climate Survey indicate that a greater percentage of students, faculty, and staff feel uncomfortable or very uncomfortable at GVSU compared to earlier surveys in 2015 and 2011. We recommend organizing focus groups around different identity areas to solicit more insight about specific areas of discomfort and/or bias as well as suggested actions that may be taken institutionally to address these concerns.
- We encourage the Division of Inclusion & Equity to use the expertise of GVSU faculty with respect to survey design and conclusions drawn from summary data so that errors like those seen with the 2019 myGVSU Climate Survey are not repeated. This could also help to produce greater buy-in as part of this critically important work.